



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
Silver Spring, MD 20910

NMFS Proposes Initial Atlantic Bluefin Tuna Quotas and Effort Controls for 2006

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) issued a proposed rule to set initial 2006 fishing year quotas for the Atlantic bluefin tuna (BFT) fishery and effort controls. Based on the 2002 quota recommended for the United States by the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic tunas (ICCAT), 2005 fishing year underharvests, and the overage of the dead discard allowance, NMFS proposes for the 2006 fishing year the quotas shown in the attached table, which also shows the proposed time-period subquotas for the General category. NMFS also proposes restricted fishing days for: all Saturdays and Sundays from November 18, 2006 through January 31, 2007, and November 23, 2006, and December 25, 2006, inclusive, provided the fishery remains open. These days are intended to extend the General category BFT fishery into the late season for the southern Atlantic region. NMFS also proposes initial General category retention limits and a schedule of Angling category retention limits for the 2006 fishing year as follows:

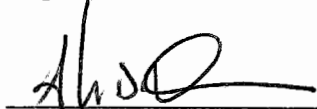
Category	Retention Limit (per day/trip)	Duration	BFT Size Class
General	3 BFT per vessel	01 June 2006 – 31 August 2006	73 inches or greater
Angling	3 BFT per vessel	01 June 2006 – 31 May 2007	47 inches to less than 73 inches

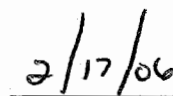
Comments on the proposed initial 2006 BFT quota specifications and effort controls should be sent to: Email: 06BFTSPECS@noaa.gov; Federal e-Rulemaking Portal: <http://www.regulations.gov>; Mail: Dianne Stephan, Highly Migratory Species Management Division, Office of Sustainable Fisheries (F/SF1), NMFS, One Blackburn Dr., Gloucester, MA 01930; Fax: 978-281-9340. Written comments must be received on or before April 11, 2006.

NMFS will hold four public hearings to receive comments from fishery participants and other members of the public regarding these proposed initial quota specifications and effort controls. The public hearing dates and locations are:

1. March 17, 2006, 3 p.m. to 5:30 p.m., Northeast Regional Office, NMFS, 1 Blackburn Dr., Gloucester, MA 01930;
2. March 22, 2006, 6 p.m. to 8:30 p.m., West Islip Public Library, 3 Higbie Lane, West Islip, NY, 11795.
3. March 24, 2006, 6:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m., Worcester County Public Library, Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, Berlin, MD 21811.
4. March 27, 2006, 6 p.m. to 8:30 p.m., Crystal Coast Civic Center, 3505 Arendell Street, Morehead City, NC, 28557.

This FAX notice is a courtesy to BFT fishery participants to help keep you informed about your fishery. Official notice of Federal fishery actions is made through filing such notice with the Office of the Federal Register. For further information contact the HMS Management Division at (978) 281-9260.


Alan Risenhoover, Acting Director
Office of Sustainable Fisheries


Date



Printed on Recycled Paper



Atlantic Bluefin Tuna Proposed Initial Quota Specifications for the 2006 Fishing Year

Category	Quota Results of FY 05 (under or overharvest)	Annual Adjustments to the Quota Results of FY 05	Baseline Allocation for FY 06	Subperiod or Subquota	Proposed Initial 2006 FY BFT Quotas
General	493.0	0.0	689.8	June - August September Oct - Jan New York Bight	1,182.8 709.7 344.8 118.3 10.0
Harpoon	66.9	0.0	57.1		124.0
Longline	145.3	-3.8	143.6	North NED South	285.1 82.3 79.6 123.2
Trap	3.8	0.0	1.5		5.3
Purse Seine	351.7	0.0	272.4		624.1
Angling	50.6	0.0	288.6	<u>School</u> North South <u>School Reserve</u> <u>Lg Sch/Sm Med</u> North South <u>Trophy</u> North South	339.2 5.7 0.0 0.0 5.7 325.8 153.8 172.0 7.7 2.5 5.2
Reserve	245.7	0.0	36.6		282.3
Total	1357.0	N/A	1489.6		2842.8

Note: 2005 Fishing year landings figures are preliminary and subject to change; For the Angling category, landings were estimated using revised preliminary LPS numbers, and North Carolina tagging figures; For commercial landings, figures are derived from NERO dealer report database.

Landings counting towards Reserve are based on scientific research projects (e.g., archival tagging off North Carolina and in the Gulf of Mexico).